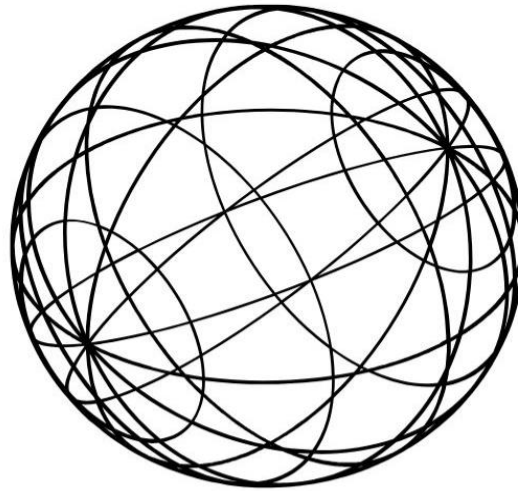


## EVENT REPORT

ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN SOUTH ASIA

# THE 3RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL WORK, LAW, AND HUMAN RIGHTS



ORGANISED BY GNLU CENTRE FOR LAW & SOCIETY AND GUJARAT STATE  
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

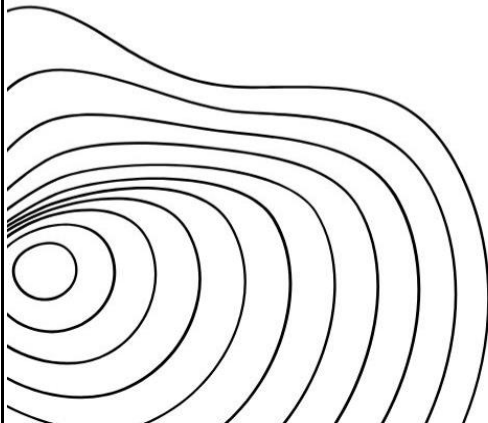
TECH-MEDIA PARTNER:



MARCH 16 - 17, 2024



GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY



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## ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

In furtherance of making continual efforts to collaborate on actionable strategies and roadmaps that contribute to a just, equitable, and efficient socio-legal landscape, the Centre for Law and Society at GNLU convened the third edition of its flagship International Conference on Social Work, Law, and Human Rights from March 16 to 17, 2024 in collaboration with the Gujarat State Human Rights Commission. The overarching theme for this edition was **Access to Justice in South Asia**. Access to justice is a complex interaction of legal infrastructure, societal norms, economic circumstances, and advancements in technology. In the diverse and populous countries of South Asia, establishing equitable access to justice is a critical but difficult task. With this edition of the Conference, delved into the complexities of access to justice in South Asia.

The Conference saw stipulating discussions which facilitated rethinking of access to justice in the region by bringing together experts, scholars, and practitioners from a variety of fields. Key reflections included strengthening child-friendly legal systems, promoting justice through alternative dispute resolution techniques, advancing social justice through multifaceted legal education programs, connecting legal changes with SDG 16.3, and encouraging new entrepreneurial solutions.

### **ABOUT GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY**

Gujarat National Law University (“**GNLU**”) is a statutory University established under the Gujarat National Law University Act, 2003, by the Government of Gujarat. Recognized by the Bar Council of India (BCI) and the University Grants Commission (UGC), GNLU holds membership in the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI), and the International Association of Law Schools (IALS). Offering interdisciplinary legal courses across five faculties: B.A. LL.B., B.S.W. LL.B., B.COM. LL.B., B.SC. LL.B. and B.B.A. LL.B., GNLU also provides post-graduate programs such as LLM and doctoral programs in law and interdisciplinary fields. GNLU extends its academic offerings to include a PhD program in Social Work, uniquely designed for interdisciplinary study combining law and interdisciplinary perspectives.

### **ABOUT CENTRE FOR LAW AND SOCIETY**

The GNLU Centre for Law and Society (“**GCLS/Centre**”), nearing completion of a decade since its inception, is the focal point for socio-legal research at GNLU. Dedicated to fostering interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research, training and extension activities, the Centre promotes a comprehensive

approach to addressing socio-legal issues. Our mission is to enhance the accessibility of our work for professionals in government, business, and law, bridging the gap between academia and policymaking.

#### **ABOUT GUJARAT STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

The Gujarat State Human Rights Commission (“**GSHRC**”) is an autonomous statutory body established to safeguard and promote human rights within Gujarat. It was constituted under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. The primary function of the GSHRC is to inquire into complaints of human rights violations, investigate incidents of alleged violations, and take necessary steps for the protection and promotion of human rights within the state.

#### **PAPER PRESENTATIONS AND PARTICIPATING UNIVERSITIES**

The manuscripts received to be presented during the conference, all of which will be reviewed through a blind peer review process and selected papers will be published in Volume V of the GNLU Law and Society Review. In total, there were about 60 submissions made and there were 120 presenters from PhD scholars, UG scholars, research scholars, professors and others, from universities and other institutes from all across the country. Some of the participating universities, colleges, and other institutes of the conference were Government Law College, Mumbai, National Law University, Delhi, Hidayatullah National Law University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh, Indian Institute of Management, Rohtak, Symbiosis Law School, Noida, Marwadi University, Thakur Ramnarayan College of Law (Affiliated to Mumbai University), REVA University, Bengaluru, National Forensic Sciences University, Saurashtra University, United World School of Law, Karnavati University, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, Balaji Law Collage, Tarsali, Vadodara, among others.

## INAUGURAL CEREMONY

The 2-day conference was kicked off with the inaugural ceremony, graced by the presence of an esteemed panel consisting of Prof. (Dr.) S. Shanthakumar, Director, GNLU, Dr. Jagadeesh Chandra T. G, Registrar, GNLU, Hon'ble Dr. Justice Kaushal Jayendra Thaker, Hon'ble Chairperson, Gujarat State Human Rights Commission, Hon'ble Mrs. Justice M. K. Thakker, David Smolin, Professor of Constitutional Law and Director of Center for Children, Law and Ethics, Cumberland School of Law, Samford University, and Dr. Apoorva Patel, Assistant Professor of Social Work and Head, Centre for Law and Society, Gujarat National Law University.



### ABOUT DIGNITARIES

- *Prof. (Dr.) S. Shanthakumar, Director, GNLU*

With more than three decades of teaching experience in reputed institutions such as Hidayatullah National Law University, Prof. S. Shanthakumar, the Director of Gujarat National Law University, a former director of Gujarat Maritime University, a President, and Gujarat International Maritime Arbitration Centre, is a Madras University graduate in law. He was a seven-year practitioner in the Madras High Court, and two of his more than a dozen books and numerous research articles were

published. Environmental Law, Human Rights Law, International Law, and Constitutional Law are his areas of specialization. He has been instrumental in other leadership positions in several international organizations, such as representing South Asia and West Asia in the IUCN Academy of Environmental Law.

- ***Dr. Jagadeesh Chandra T. G, Registrar, GNLU***

As a Legal Expert Member of the Committee on Institutionalization of Transparent ABS Mechanisms, constituted by the Gujarat Biodiversity Board, Government of Gujarat, Given Consultancy and Expert Opinion on Legal Issues for the Effective Implementation of ABS Provisions.

- ***Hon'ble Dr. Justice Kaushal Jayendra Thaker, Hon'ble Chairperson, Gujarat State Human Rights Commission***

Hon'ble Dr. Justice Thaker,, born into a family of lawyers in Bombay, embarked on an illustrious legal career. He completed his schooling at St. Xavier's School and Gujarat Law Society in Ahmedabad, excelling in his studies. He was a top graduate from Gujarat University, earning his LL.B. and later a Ph.D. in Environmental Law. He joined the Bar in 1987 as a pleader and became an advocate in the High Court of Gujarat in 1988, where he pursued various legal fields. His career also included appointments as a part-time lecturer at several law colleges and a resource fellow at the Gujarat State Judicial Academy and the National Judicial Academy in Bhopal.

- ***Hon'ble Mrs. Justice M. K. Thakker, Judge, High Court of Gujarat***

Hon'ble Justice Thakkar was born on November 6th, 1977, in Patdi, Gujarat. They completed their Graduation in Commerce from Gujarat University in March 1997, and thereafter completed their Law degree from Gujarat University in May 2001. They were enrolled as an Advocate with the Bar Council of Gujarat in the year 2001 and started their practice with Mr. N.K. Majmudar. They handled matters of civil, criminal, consumer protection, and other land laws. Later they were promoted as Assistant Government Pleader and thereafter as Additional Public Prosecutor in Gujarat High Court. Finally, they were appointed as Judge, High Court of Gujarat, on April 5th, 2023.

- ***David Smolin, Professor of Constitutional Law and director of Center for Children, Law and Ethics, Samford University Cumberland School of Law.***

David Smolin is an independent expert for the Hague Conference on Private International Law and the International Social Service focusing on intercountry adoption, children’s rights, and surrogacy. He has been involved in the development of the Verona Principles on international surrogacy standards. Smolin is also the special advisor to the Swiss NGO Child Identity Protection and a member of the Ethics Committee at Children’s Hospital of Alabama. He has taught across multiple legal fields, such as family law, children’s rights, bioethics, and constitutional law, and has written extensively in all of those areas, generally focusing on protecting vulnerable children. In 2019, Smolin received the “Outstanding Scholar in Adoption Award.”

- ***Dr. Apoorva Patel, Assistant Professor of Social Work, Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar***

She is an Assistant Professor of Social Work, Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar, and has worked on a study on ‘Psychosocial and Socio-economic Status of Inmates’ Families of Vadodara District’– a Project by Govt. of Gujarat. She also contributed in the workshop on “Clinical Legal Education and Access to Justice”, organised by the Gujarat National Law University under the project “Role of Clinical Legal Education in improving the quality of legal education and increasing access to justice to the marginalised in the State of Gujarat” funded by Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India, August 02, 2020.



## KEY TAKEAWAYS

### ▪ *Prof. (Dr.) S. Shanthakumar*

During the event, Prof. (Dr.) S. Shanthakumar underscored several key takeaways. Firstly, he highlighted the collaborative essence of the conference, underscoring the partnership with the Gujarat Human Rights Commission. He extended a warm welcome and appreciation to distinguished guests such as Dr. Kaushal Jain Thakur, Prof. David Smolin, Ms. Swaroopama, and others, whose expertise significantly enriched the discussions.

Furthermore, Prof. Shanthakumar's spotlight on GNLU's Bachelors in Social Work program shed light on the institution's commitment to holistic legal education and societal progress. By highlighting this program as the only offering among National Law Universities in India, he underscored its unique role in shaping socio-legal drivers of inclusive justice. Through this program, GNLU is not only equipping students with legal knowledge but also instilling in them a deep sense of social responsibility and a commitment to effecting positive change in society.

### ▪ *Professor David Smolin*

Professor David Smolin's address at the event encapsulated several profound insights regarding children's rights and their critical role in shaping India's future. He began by emphasizing the fundamental humanity of children, underscoring the importance of recognizing their dignity and fairness in all aspects of life. His discourse on addressing discrimination based on gender, caste, and class underscored the imperative for societal acceptance and equity for every child. He particularly shed light on the vulnerabilities faced by children orphaned due to economic poverty and socio-economic instability, advocating for special legal mechanisms to ensure their rights, including birth registration and family support.

His call for addressing the root causes of child separation, such as poverty and governance shortcomings, resonated strongly, urging for holistic solutions to these systemic issues. Additionally, his advocacy for early childhood care and education, in line with UN recommendations, highlighted the transformative potential of investing in children's development, while also addressing cultural barriers to education and child labor prevalent in India. His comprehensive analysis urged for a paradigm shift towards prioritizing children's well-being, which is foundational to the country's progress in areas such as sanitation, nutrition, and education.



- ***Hon'ble Dr. Justice Kaushal Jayendra Thaker***

Hon'ble Dr. Justice Kaushal Jayendra Thaker delivered a series of poignant takeaways during the event, shedding light on Gujarat's notable strides in advancing accessibility to justice, notably through mechanisms like the Letter Petition. He illustrated the evolution of the justice system, citing a historical example where magisterial power prevailed without due trial, emphasizing the need to condemn such criminal activities and ensure justice for all. Quoting the Chief Justice of Gujarat from 2000, he expressed the importance of not just providing a constitution but also ensuring its implementation to safeguard individuals' rights. Critically, he addressed the dwindling roles of judges, NGOs, and public officials in protecting the rights of vulnerable groups, urging for renewed dedication in this regard. While praising Gujarat's practical initiatives like legal clinics and mobile vans for rural communities, he emphasized the evolving role of judges as frontline champions of justice rather than mere adjudicators. Dr. Thaker's discourse underscored the necessity of dialogue and interaction in promoting access to justice for all, envisaging the conference as a catalyst for fostering such awareness and action.

- ***Hon'ble Mrs. Justice M. K. Thakker***

Hon'ble Mrs. Justice M. K. Thakker delivered a comprehensive discourse during the event, highlighting critical takeaways concerning victim support and access to justice. She emphasized the importance of law enforcers providing constant vigilance and support to victims, citing Section 154 of CRPC as pivotal in enabling complainants to lodge FIR applications. Justice Thakker urged dormant District Supervisors to promptly respond to victims' situations. In instances of government inactivity, she advised aggrieved individuals to seek recourse through filing individual cases in courts. She referenced the Lalita Kumari Case to underscore the significance of disclosing cognizable offenses and advocated for regular medical tests to be made compulsory by central, state, or local authorities. Furthermore, she stressed the importance of victim compensation and rehabilitation, while also highlighting the need to protect victims' personal information as mandated by law. Justice Thakker reiterated the principle that justice is a right for all, not just a privilege for a few. She also emphasized the severity of sex trafficking, particularly concerning children, and called for collective action to combat this injustice. Her insights underscored the imperative of ensuring justice and support for all victims, particularly the most vulnerable in society.

- ***Dr. Jagadeesh Chandra T. G, Registrar, GNLU***

Dr. Jagadeesh Chandra T. G, Registrar of GNLU, conveyed several significant takeaways during the event - Reflecting on past initiatives like the Grameen Nyayalay Act of 2008, aimed at delivering justice to rural communities, he lamented the lack of widespread implementation due to financial constraints despite noble objectives. Dr. Jagadeesh also underscored the importance of Access to Justice in South Asia in the 21st Century, highlighting its role as a vital tool for creating policy prescriptions and championing justice accessibility through collaborative endeavors. Demonstrating appreciation for the organizing committee, supportive staff, and administrative team, he acknowledged their dedication and hard work in ensuring the successful completion of the event, emphasizing the collective effort required to advance social justice and human rights initiatives.

## LAUNCH OF HANDBOOKS ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The inaugural ceremony also saw the launch of the Handbooks created by the Centre in collaboration with Saral Kanoon on Women's Rights and Children's Rights. More information regarding the handbooks can be found here: <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/taking-law-society-university-india-goes-forward>. Advocates Aditya Bhatt and Jhanvi Jhoshi were invited to launch the handbooks.

### Aditya Bhatt, Founder of Bhatt & Joshi Associates

Aditya Bhatt is a seasoned legal professional with an illustrious career spanning multiple judicial forums. His expertise covers an expansive range of legal disciplines, from Civil Law, Criminal Law, and Constitutional Law to specialized areas like Corporate & Company Law, Bankruptcy and Insolvency Law, and Cyber Law, among others.

Aditya Bhatt's insights shared during the event reflected on several key takeaways regarding societal progress and reform. His poignant speech emphasized the growing influence of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and universities in reshaping societal approaches to address prevailing social issues. Notably, Bhatt underscored the pivotal role of technology in expanding outreach beyond traditional methods, such as information booklets, facilitating more effective engagement with marginalized communities. His reflections provided valuable insights into leveraging technology and collaborative efforts to drive meaningful societal change and support those in need.



## ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: INTEGRATING INNOVATION AND ADVANCING SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMS IN LEGAL EDUCATION

The roundtable discussion on **Integrating Innovation and Advancing Social Justice Through Interdisciplinary Programs in Legal Education** explored the intersectionality of legal education and social justice principles. With contributions from prominent figures in academia and social work, the roundtable provided a platform for nuanced discussions and insightful reflections on the transformative potential of interdisciplinary programs in legal education. Through a comprehensive analysis, the panelists sought to chart a course towards innovative pedagogical approaches that promote social justice, equity, and inclusivity within legal education.



### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ***Prof. (Dr.) S. Shanthakumar, Director, Gujarat National Law University***

Starting off the discussion, Professor Shanthakumar delves into the historical evolution of interdisciplinary approaches in legal education, tracing back to the 1980s and emphasizing the integration of social justice within legal frameworks. He highlights early experiments at Maharishi Dayanand University and Madras University, stressing the need for universities to equip students with the ability to interpret law actively and meet societal needs. Prof. Shanthakumar explores the rationale for integrating social justice into legal education, citing the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 as

providing strategic direction in this regard. He emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in addressing complex societal challenges effectively, aligning with the NEP's advocacy for multidisciplinary learning. Overall, his insights underscore the significance of interdisciplinary education in legal contexts and its alignment with contemporary educational policies, promoting a holistic understanding of societal issues and social justice within legal education.

▪ ***Prof. (Dr.) Dilip Ukey, Vice Chancellor, Maharashtra National Law University***

Prof. (Dr.) Dilip Ukey, Vice Chancellor of Maharashtra National Law University, elucidates the nuanced differences between interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches in legal education. He delineates three key approaches to interdisciplinary programs: socio-legal, comparative, and historical. Under the socio-legal approach, Prof. Ukey emphasizes that law is intricately intertwined with societal and economic factors, citing specific examples such as the amendment to IPC Section 309 as evidence of the impact of socio-legal issues on legal reforms. . . Furthermore, he advocates for the integration of social work principles into legal education, believing that it enhances legal perspectives and promotes social justice. Overall, Prof. Ukey underscores the dynamic relationship between law and society and advocates for an interdisciplinary approach that acknowledges the complexities of legal issues within broader social contexts, emphasizing research, critical analysis, and the integration of diverse perspectives.

▪ ***Dr. Anoop Kumar Bhartiya, Professor and Head, Department of Social Work, University of Lucknow***

Dr. Anoop Kumar Bhartiya, Professor and Head of the Department of Social Work at the University of Lucknow, elucidates the intrinsic connection between law and society, asserting that they are inseparable facets of the same entity. He emphasizes that legal norms and practices are deeply intertwined with societal norms and values, shaping and being shaped by them. Dr. Bhartiya advocates for a holistic approach to legal education that integrates social perspectives, enabling students to analyze legal issues within broader societal contexts. Highlighting the integration of social work principles into legal education, Dr. Bhartiya suggests that concepts from social work, such as understanding the quality of life and individual needs within society, can enrich legal perspectives and improve legal practice effectiveness.

He contextualizes his arguments within the framework of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, emphasizing its objectives related to interdisciplinary education and holistic development, which align

closely with the integration of social work principles into legal education. In summary, he underscores the importance of recognizing the interconnectedness of law and society, advocating for the integration of social work principles into legal education to effectively address societal challenges, and highlighting the relevance of these principles within the context of the NEP 2020.

Professor Anoop emphasized upon the urgent need for vice chancellors to prioritize the integration of social justice principles across all streams of education. He advocates for action, highlighting several key points:

1. **Integration of Social Justice Principles:** The speaker stresses the importance of incorporating principles of social justice into all educational streams.
2. **Sensitization and Field Integration:** Professor Anoop emphasizes sensitizing students and integrating social justice principles into fieldwork, promoting real-world application and experiences to instill values of social justice.
3. **Advocacy for Transforming Legal Education:** He advocates for a broader philosophical shift in legal education, transforming it into principle-based justice education.
4. **Implementation:** While calling for the implementation of this philosophy into practice, specific details on how to achieve this are not provided. This highlights the need for further discussion and action planning among stakeholders to effectively integrate social justice principles into education.



- ***Prof. (Dr.) Archana Kaushik, Director, Fieldwork and Professor, Department of Social Work, University of Delhi***

Prof. (Dr.) Archana Kaushik, Director of Fieldwork and Professor at the Department of Social Work, University of Delhi, emphasizes the intrinsic relationship between law and social work, asserting that they are interlinked in addressing societal issues. Delving into the intersectionality of social justice issues, she highlights the complexities of addressing multiple dimensions of inequality and injustice, emphasizing how these issues intersect with various aspects of identity such as age, gender, and socio-economic status. Using elder abuse as a concrete example, Prof. Kaushik illustrates how social work principles can complement legal approaches in tackling complex societal problems. She explores the synergies between social work principles and legal frameworks, advocating for collaborative efforts between the two disciplines to develop comprehensive solutions that address the root causes of social injustice.

Prof. Kaushik advocates for interdisciplinary approaches that leverage the strengths of both social work and law, emphasizing the role of education in promoting collaboration. She suggests that integrating social work principles into legal education can deepen understanding of the human dimensions of legal issues and equip future legal professionals with the skills and perspectives needed to advocate for social justice effectively. In summary, Prof. Kaushik underscores the importance of collaborative efforts between social work and law in addressing societal challenges, using concrete examples to illustrate her points. She advocates for the integration of social work principles into legal education to promote holistic approaches to social justice.

- ***Prof. (Dr.) Shivani D. Mishra, Sardar Patel University***

Prof. (Dr.) Shivani D. Mishra from Sardar Patel University, serving as the chair, underscores the importance of collaboration between legal and social work professionals for efficient advocacy of individual rights. She shares insights gleaned from her own experiences, highlighting various aspects of this collaboration:

1. **Integrated Service Model & Win-Win Collaboration:** Drawing from personal experience, she mentions the Integrated Service Model for undergraduate students, noting the lack of awareness about legal rights in rural and slum areas. She cites gender Lok Adalats as an example of achieving social justice without extensive legal processes. Furthermore, Dr. Mishra

discussed the potential of collaboration with local bodies including panchayats, citing the example of Anand District in their increased access to justice.

2. **Holistic Development and Interdisciplinary Work:** Referring to WHO's emphasis on holistic development and the National Education Policy's recommendation for interdisciplinary work, she underscores the value social workers place on breaking down silos. She mentions signing 35 MOUs on behalf of her institution to promote collaboration.
3. **Practice-Based Programs & Problem-Solving Approach:** Emphasizing the importance of practice-based programs & problem-solving approach, she cites examples like the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY). She highlights the effectiveness of interdisciplinary teams in addressing complex community issues.

▪ ***Shri GS Pavan Cherry, Program manager, MG-NERGA Andhra Pradesh Government***

Shri GS Pavan Cherry, Programme Manager of MGNERGA Andhra Pradesh Government, provides a unique perspective on integrating social work principles into legal education, emphasizing the structured problem-solving approach they offer. He highlights the importance of a multidisciplinary approach for a holistic understanding of societal issues and stresses the significance of relationship-building in legal practice. Integrating social work principles enriches the capacity of future lawyers, enabling them to contribute positively to addressing broader social challenges.

Professor Param then introduced the idea of imagination and critical thinking in the social work arena, emphasizing the need to understand social problems beyond legal or social work dimensions. He advocates for widening and deepening perspectives, incorporating imagination and creativity into problem-solving approaches. By embracing these strategies, legal education can better equip students to address complex societal challenges and promote social justice.

In conclusion, the panellists collectively advocate for an integrated approach to legal education that incorporates social work principles, recognizes collective responsibility for social justice, and fosters imagination and creativity in problem-solving. This approach enables future legal professionals to address societal issues effectively and promote social justice principles in their practice.

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Professor Shanthakumar shifted the table towards a thought-provoking discussion challenging the conventional belief that legal education inherently corresponds to justice policy. He underscored the



importance of fostering critical thinking among students and seeks input on facilitating this from both faculty and the audience, encouraging an interactive exchange of ideas.

Throughout the conversation, several key takeaways emerged. Firstly, there's a poignant reflection on the significance of understanding pain and privilege. By drawing attention to disparities in food options, the speaker prompts introspection on how individuals can empathize with the struggles of others when they take their own privileges for granted. Moreover, the discussion delves into the perception of social work as a profession, highlighted by an anecdote from Nepal questioning whether mediation is considered social work. The roundtable discussion underscored the importance of integrating social justice principles into legal education to foster critical thinking, interdisciplinary collaboration, and proactive engagement in addressing societal challenges. The diverse perspectives shared during the discussion offer valuable insights and actionable strategies.

## ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: REIMAGINING ACCESS TO JUSTICE THROUGH ADR MECHANISMS

The discourse embarked on an exploration of the multifaceted role of ADR mechanisms in enhancing access to justice. Panelists delved into the nuances of mediation and other ADR modalities, seeking to uncover opportunities for fostering inclusivity, empowerment, and fairness within the justice system. Through their collective expertise and impassioned advocacy, they underscored the imperative of embracing ADR as a catalyst for change, capable of transcending traditional legal paradigms and expanding access to justice for individuals and communities globally. Throughout the discussion, a diverse array of perspectives emerged, weaving together narratives of hope and possibility. From personal anecdotes to scholarly insights, the discourse navigated the complexities of justice delivery systems, offering glimpses into alternative pathways characterized by collaboration, empathy, and resilience.



### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ***Sr. Adv. Sriram Panchu, Madras High Court & Internationally Recognized Mediator***

Sriram Panchu's discourse extended beyond the practicalities of mediation to the realm of advocacy and vision. He passionately articulated the transformative potential of mediation in reshaping the landscape of access to justice. Panchu emphasized the need for a paradigm shift in societal perceptions, urging stakeholders to recognize mediation not merely as an alternative but as a primary avenue for dispute resolution. He underscored the imperative of nurturing a culture that values mediation, investing in the training of quality mediators, and integrating mediation into legal education and professional development curricula. Additionally, Panchu advocated for proactive engagement with

policymakers and legislators to enact supportive legal frameworks that bolster the role of mediation in promoting justice and societal harmony.

- ***Senior Advocate V. Mohana, Supreme Court of India***

V. Mohana, in her discourse, adeptly presented a plethora of insightful anecdotes, vividly illustrating the remarkable efficacy of mediation in yielding satisfactory outcomes, particularly within familial and rural settings. With fervor, she underscored the pivotal significance of legal awareness in propagating mediation as a viable alternative to traditional litigation routes. Additionally, she placed significant emphasis on the indispensable role of mediators as adept facilitators of constructive dialogue and architects of tailored, mutually advantageous resolutions.

- ***Ms. Rukmini Menon, Director at CAMP Arbitration and Mediation Practice Pvt. Ltd.***

In her discussion, Rukmini Menon delved into the multifaceted role of mediators in mitigating power imbalances inherent in mediation processes. Ms. Menon elucidated the imperative need for bespoke strategies, emphasizing active listening and the utilization of private sessions to empower participants and secure fair and equitable resolutions. Furthermore, she underscored the paramount importance of confidentiality and the intrinsic party-centric ethos of mediation, highlighting how these elements collectively cultivate an environment of trust and foster the open, effective exchange of communication.



- ***Prof. (Dr.) Ruhi Paul, Professor of Law and Registrar at National Law University, Delhi***

Prof. Ruhi Paul passionately championed the necessity for a sophisticated comprehension of access to justice, advocating for the incorporation of both procedural and substantive justice considerations. With a visionary approach, she proposed the implementation of meticulously crafted mediation initiatives, informed by an exhaustive analysis of dispute dynamics, thereby enhancing their efficacy manifold. Moreover, she underscored the critical importance of integrating psychological and sociological insights into mediation frameworks, recognizing their pivotal role in comprehensively addressing the diverse needs and concerns of all parties engaged in the mediation process.

- ***Dr. Sakshi Vijay, Associate Professor, JGLS - Arbitration and Mediation***

Dr. Sakshi Vijay offered a compelling critique of arbitration, pointing out its potential drawbacks in terms of impeding access to justice. With a meticulous examination, she underscored mediation's clear advantages over arbitration, particularly in terms of expediency, cost-effectiveness, and the preservation of the quality of outcomes. Drawing attention to mediation's inherent focus on the needs and interests of the involved parties, she emphasized its unique capability to not only resolve disputes efficiently but also to nurture and sustain relationships beyond the resolution of conflicts. Additionally, she stressed the urgent need for cultivating a culture of mediation and enhancing public awareness regarding its manifold benefits. Adv. Shahariar Sadat, Director, Academic and Legal Empowerment, BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Shahariar Sadat eloquently underscored the pivotal significance of community-level mediation, shedding light on its indispensable role in addressing justice disparities, especially in marginalized areas such as rural Bangladesh. With a keen awareness of cultural nuances, he emphasized the critical necessity for culturally attuned mediators and localized methodologies to navigate justice needs adeptly. Furthermore, he accentuated mediation's profound impact in empowering marginalized communities, serving as a catalyst for social cohesion and fostering sustainable relationships at the grassroots level.

- ***Adv. Deepak Raj Bhatt, Senior Program Officer, Natural Resource Conflict Transformation Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal***

Deepak Raj Bhatt offered to the discourse a comprehensive overview of Nepal's mediation terrain, drawing parallels between mediators and the vital role of societal healers. With profound insight, he accentuated the significance of community-based mediation initiatives as instrumental in bridging divides and nurturing constructive dialogue. Furthermore, he placed a strong emphasis on the integration of traditional conflict resolution methodologies into contemporary mediation frameworks, recognizing their intrinsic value in ensuring cultural resonance and widespread acceptance within the diverse fabric of Nepalese society.

- ***Dr. Apoorva Patel, Assistant Professor of Social Work & Head, Centre for Law and Society, GNLU; Mediator and Trainer, BIMS, Dhaka***

Dr. Apoorva Patel helped the discussion delve into the crucial consideration of integrating social workers into the modern mediation landscape. With insightful deliberation, she highlighted the substantial contributions that social workers could offer to mediation endeavors, specifically in facilitating effective communication, unpacking intricate social dynamics, and advocating for the rights of vulnerable individuals within the process. Dr. Patel's inquiry catalyzed contemplation on the interdisciplinary essence of mediation, sparking recognition of the immense value inherent in collaborative approaches that leverage the diverse expertise of professionals from various fields.

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The panelists articulated a collective vision for embracing mediation not merely as an alternative but as a primary avenue for dispute resolution, advocating for a paradigm shift in societal perceptions. Their discussions vividly illustrated the efficacy of mediation, particularly within familial and rural settings, emphasizing its capacity to yield satisfactory outcomes. Moreover, insights were shared on mitigating power imbalances inherent in mediation processes and the significance of bespoke strategies, active listening, and confidentiality in fostering trust and equitable resolutions.

Critiques of arbitration highlighted mediation's advantages in expediency, cost-effectiveness, and preserving the quality of outcomes, underlining the importance of cultivating a culture of mediation and enhancing public awareness. Additionally, the event emphasized the significance of community-level mediation, the integration of traditional conflict resolution methodologies, and the potential contributions of interdisciplinary collaboration, collectively reaffirming the imperative of ADR as a catalyst for inclusivity, empowerment, and fairness within the justice system.

## PANEL DISCUSSION: EMPOWERING THE FUTURE BY REDEFINING ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN

The panel embarked on a comprehensive exploration of the multifaceted dimensions challenges faced in realizing access to justice, particularly emphasizing the vulnerabilities faced by children in navigating legal systems. The panel underscored our collective duty to ensure toward Children in ensuring their Access to Justice and explored persisting roadblocks and lukewarm implementation of international legal frameworks such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Furthermore, the need for a proactive approach towards ensuring prevention of violence against children and in ensuring their access to justice was highly emphasized.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- *Dr. Asha Verma, Assistant Professor of Law, GNLU*

Prof. Asha Verma provided the introductory remarks, emphasizing the collective responsibility incumbent upon society to ensure access to justice for children. She underscored the imperative for effective measures aimed at preventing violence, providing holistic support to victims, and holding perpetrators accountable. Prof. Verma eloquently highlighted the pivotal role of children in shaping



the trajectory of our collective future, urging a concerted effort to bridge the gap between policy intent and practical implementation.

- ***Advocate Aaditya Bhatt, Gujarat High Court***

Advocate Aaditya Bhatt, in his discourse, provided an insightful analysis of the existing legal frameworks, including international conventions such as the UN Convention on the Protection of Child Rights. He highlighted the institutional machinery in place for facilitating access to justice, while also shedding light on the persistent challenges hindering effective implementation. Bhatt emphasized the need for innovative solutions, citing the Khoya Paya portal as a noteworthy example, and advocated for a human-centric approach in policy formulation, drawing inspiration from industry exemplars like Apple.

- ***Swaroopama Chaturvedi, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India***

Ms. Swaroopama articulated the challenges besetting the effective implementation of legal frameworks such as the Juvenile Justice Act and POCSO. With meticulous detail, she delineated the discrepancies between funding allocations and operational compliance within shelter homes, underscoring the urgent need for systemic reform. Chaturvedi passionately advocated for a paradigm shift towards acknowledging violations and fostering a culture of reverence for children's rights, thus laying the foundation for a more equitable justice system.

- ***Ms. Yousra Hasona, Human Rights Lawyer, Palestine***

In her impassioned intervention, Ms. Yousra championed the cause of understanding and rehabilitating children, rather than resorting to punitive measures. With a keen focus on holistic rehabilitation and community support, she debunked the prevalent stigmatization of children in society. Hasona underscored the critical importance of empowering children to assert their voices and agency, thereby fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment conducive to their well-being and development.

- ***Prof. (Dr.) Anjani Singh Tomar, Head, Academic Affairs & Professor of Law, GNLU***

Professor Anjani elucidated the pivotal role of education in bridging the chasm between legislative intent and practical application. She advocated for inclusive and interactive educational methodologies that equip future generations with the requisite knowledge and skills to navigate evolving societal

challenges. Dr. Tomar underscored the transformative potential of digitalization in augmenting educational outreach and fostering greater awareness of children's rights.



- ***Prof. (Dr.) Anoop Kumar Bharatiya, Lucknow University***

Anoop Kumar Bharatiya expounded upon the transformative power of education in engendering awareness, building capacity, and fostering inclusive participation within justice systems. With a nuanced understanding of the intersectionality between education and legal empowerment, he championed the cause of incorporating legal education as a mandatory component of the curriculum. Bharatiya emphasized the imperative of leveraging technological advancements to facilitate effective information dissemination and community engagement, thus empowering children to assert their rights.

- ***Shri Indrajeet Chauhan, Prayas, Ahmedabad***

Indrajeet Chauhan delineated the imperative of collaborative endeavours between NGOs, the private sector, and the public sector in ensuring universal access to justice for children. With meticulous attention to systemic challenges such as victim compensation and trafficking, he underscored the collective responsibility of society in effectuating meaningful change. Chauhan passionately advocated



for the effective implementation of extant laws and mechanisms, thus paving the way for a more equitable and just society for children.

- ***Prof. (Dr.) Sony Kunjappan, Central University of Gujarat***

Sony Kunjappan underscored the importance of fostering child-friendly environments that prioritize children's voices and rights. With a keen focus on formalizing agreements and frameworks involving diverse stakeholders, he emphasized the critical role of collaborative partnerships in addressing implementation gaps. Dr. Kunjappan advocated for leveraging technology to amplify outreach efforts and facilitate greater access to justice, thereby fostering a more inclusive and supportive ecosystem for children's rights.

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The panel discussion served as a compelling call to action, illuminating the systemic barriers and transformative opportunities inherent in advancing access to justice for all, especially marginalized and vulnerable populations. It underscored the imperative for collaborative, multi-sectoral approaches that prioritize the voices and needs of children, informed by a nuanced understanding of their experiences and rights. As the discussion drew to a close, it became evident that achieving universal access to justice requires not only legislative reforms but also sustained commitment, innovative interventions, and a collective resolve to uphold the inherent dignity and rights of every individual, irrespective of age, background, or circumstance.

## PANEL DISCUSSION: REALIZING RULE OF LAW AND EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN LIGHT OF SDG 16 OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The discussion was moderated by Assistant Professor of Law at GNLU, Dr. Udaykumara Ramakrishna B.N. The aim of the event was to delve into the significance of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16.3 within the framework of the 2016 UN Millennium Development Goals. Specifically, it emphasized the importance of upholding the rule of law and promoting equal access to justice. The discussion commenced with the Moderator quoting a poignant quote by American novelist William Gaddis, “*you get justice in the next world, in this world you have the law*”, setting the tone for an exploration of SDG 16.3 and its relevance for current and future generations. Panelists delved into the intricate aspects of the SDG, emphasizing the three R’s: Recognition, Redistribution, and Representation in upholding the rule of law globally. The session underscored the shared responsibilities in preserving and advancing the rule of law, advocating for justice as a fundamental pillar of societal progress.



### KEY TAKEAWAYS

The panelists offered diverse perspectives on various facets of SDG 16, ranging from the role of feminist lawyers in advancing social equality and justice to the challenges faced in achieving equal access to justice for all. Discussions revolved around the concept of the rule of law, access to justice, and the critical role of legal institutions in promoting SDG 16 and ensuring the well-being of society.

- ***Dr. Udaykumara Ramakrishnan***

Professor Ramakrishnan set the stage for the discussion with a thought-provoking quote by William Gaddis, emphasizing the distinction between justice and law. He initiated the discourse on SDG 16.3 by highlighting its critical importance for present and future generations. The moderator underscored the need for a global commitment to upholding the rule of law as global justice is what is required currently, stressing the three R's: Recognition, Redistribution, and Representation as fundamental to achieving justice and equality worldwide.

- ***Swarupama Chaturvedi, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India***

Senior Advocate Swarupama Chaturvedi addressed the role of feminism in promoting social equality and justice, along with the challenges faced by feminist lawyers in achieving these goals. She emphasised that the rule of law is synonymous with access to justice, wherein legal recourse and information rights are paramount. She highlighted the need for concrete steps by governments to enact, refine, and amend laws to ensure justice, stressing the importance of considering the needs of every societal class.

Identifying stakeholders including government bodies, machineries, and statutory bodies, emphasised the shared responsibility of ensuring access to justice at all levels of society. She underscored the uniqueness of all genders, quoting the adage that educating one woman educates an entire family, highlighting the foundational role of gender equality in societal progress. She argued that feminism should adopt a new outlook, recognising the uniqueness of all genders and advocating for equality across the spectrum. She emphasised the importance of feminist advocacy for all genders, not just women and men, and stressed the value of recognising and respecting the heterogeneity of gender dynamics.



- ***Nisha Bagchi, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India***

During the panel discussion, advocate Nisha Bagchi provided a comprehensive overview of the challenges and solutions related to access to justice. She outlined three key aspects: the rule of law, the concept of access, and the difficulties in achieving access. Advocate Bagchi highlighted the alarming data from the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) indicating that 75% of individuals lack access to justice, particularly among vulnerable groups. She emphasized the foundational principles of the rule of law, tracing back to historical documents like the Magna Carta, and underscored the importance of fundamental rights enshrined in the Indian Constitution. Advocate Bagchi stressed the need for allocating resources to ensure equal access to justice, prioritizing the establishment of accessible forums over merely providing rights that may remain unutilized.

Drawing on the UNDP definition, she highlighted the importance of reaching out to marginalized groups. Advocate Bagchi referenced legal scholar J. S. Krishna Iyer's contributions to the adjudication of access to justice. She proposed several strategies for improving access, including sensitization, awareness campaigns, and providing easy language access for different categories of individuals, especially marginalized groups. Advocate Bagchi emphasized the need to map local power structures, identify challenges, and utilize technology to enhance access. She concluded by advocating for a holistic approach that addresses the diverse needs of individuals and communities, ensuring that access to justice is a reality for all.

- ***Shirin Khajuria, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India***

Advocate Shirin Khajuria contributed valuable insights during the panel discussion, focusing on the role of legal institutions in advancing SDG 16 and the rule of law. She emphasized the critical role of legal institutions in responding to humanitarian crises and advocated for feminist perspectives in promoting legal rights and gender equality. Quoting Fali S. Nariman, she highlighted the disparity between the abundance of laws and the actual delivery of justice. Advocate Khajuria discussed the significance of SDG 16, particularly target 3 of the UN 2030 agenda, shedding light on its initial exclusion and subsequent recognition. She emphasized that the rule of law is an essential component of the Indian Constitution, citing the Kesavananda Bharati case. Advocate Khajuria outlined four key aspects essential for promoting SDG 16: strengthening legal forums, ensuring equality and equity, reducing corruption, and upholding human rights.

She drew attention towards concerning indicators and data related to SDG 16.3, such as the disproportionately high number of undertrial prisoners and the shortage of judges. Advocate Khajuria referenced the World Justice Report's ranking of India in terms of rule of law and access to justice. She cited various legal precedents demonstrating the Indian judiciary's commitment to upholding the rule of law. Advocate Khajuria emphasized the importance of stakeholders' efforts in promoting access to justice, particularly through urban governance provisions in the constitution. She concluded by reaffirming the central role of legal institutions in ensuring access to justice for all individuals.

- ***Dr. Ruchi Sinha, Associate Professor at Tata Institute of Social Sciences***

During the panel discussion, Professor Ruchi Sinha elaborated on the intersection of SDG 16 with the rule of law, victim support systems, and access to justice. She highlighted that while SDG 16 aims to promote peace, justice, and strong institutions, its implementation is not uniform and undergoes continuous evaluation. Professor Sinha emphasized the multi-dimensional nature of access to justice, extending beyond legal frameworks to encompass social, economic, political, and cultural aspects. Professor Sinha noted that many individuals refrain from seeking legal recourse due to barriers such as lack of awareness and complexity of the legal system. She stressed the necessity of enhancing people's ability to access forums and have their voices heard, advocating for equitable access to justice. She also addressed the issue of corruption within the legal system, highlighting efforts to combat it and advocating for justice to be accessible to all, in line with the principles laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Professor Sinha concluded by calling for a shift from a political to an

apolitical approach to SDG implementation, emphasizing the need for concerted efforts to achieve its objectives impartially and effectively.

▪ ***Dr. Ravi Saxena, Assistant Professor, Narsee Monjee Institute of Management***

Professor Saxena delved into the intersection of feminist legal strategies with the rule of law and SDG 16, emphasizing how these strategies illuminate pathways toward justice. He underscored the potential of technology and innovation to empower victim participation in legal proceedings and enhance access to information and resources.

He acknowledged the complexity of viewing legal resources and justice solely through the lens of the rule of law, stressing the multifaceted nature of accessibility. Despite the presence of the rule of law, Professor Saxena pointed out that many individuals and marginalized communities still struggle to access justice due to various barriers, including class disparities and the impacts of natural disasters or refugee crises. He emphasized the importance of legislation that is accessible to all, using easily understandable language and advocated for the separation of powers between state organs to facilitate smoother access to justice.

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Audience participation played a vital role in enriching the discourse, with attendees actively contributing questions and sharing their experiences. Engaging discussions explored topics such as the intersection of feminism with legal advocacy for transgenders and other identities which are not talked about, the historical emergence of such concepts, challenges in accessing justice, and the role of stakeholders in promoting the rule of law.

In conclusion, the panel discussion served as a platform to emphasize the crucial role of SDG 16.3 in promoting the rule of law and ensuring equal access to justice for all individuals. Throughout the event, several key takeaways emerged, shedding light on essential aspects of achieving SDG 16 objectives. The discussion highlighted the imperative of collective action. Panelists emphasized that achieving SDG 16 goals requires collaboration among various stakeholders, including governments, legal professionals, civil society organizations, and communities. By working together, they can develop innovative solutions, share best practices, and advocate for policy reforms that promote the rule of law and equal access to justice.

## PANEL DISCUSSION: EXAMINING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A SOLUTION ORIENTED APPROACH TO ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The panel on Examining Social Entrepreneurship as an approach to Access to Justice discussed a wide range of topics related to the concept of Social Entrepreneurship. The panel discussion convened to delve into the multifaceted landscape of social entrepreneurship, aiming to unravel its intricacies and potential as a vehicle for societal transformation and access to justice.



### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ***Prof. Dr. Ankur Sarin, Associate Professor of Public Systems Group, IIM Ahmedabad***

He delved into the complexities of this concept, emphasizing its distinction from traditional business models by focusing on its commitment to addressing social and environmental issues alongside financial goals. He underscored social entrepreneurship's potential for innovation and societal transformation, portraying social entrepreneurs as change agents who challenge existing paradigms. Through compelling examples, including the Central University of Gujarat and

educational initiatives by the Indian Institute of Management in Ahmedabad, he illustrated the tangible impacts of social entrepreneurship on individuals and communities. However, the discussion also acknowledged institutional constraints such as limited access to finance, regulatory hurdles, and entrenched socio-economic inequality that hinder the widespread implementation and sustainability of social entrepreneurship initiatives.

- ***Dr Anar Mehta, National President, Women's Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry***

Ms. Anar Mehta emphasized the pivotal role of social entrepreneurship in advancing gender equality and empowering women. Drawing from her expertise in supporting women-led businesses, she highlighted the obstacles women face in entrepreneurship, from limited access to finance to societal biases. Through compelling examples, she showcased how social entrepreneurship initiatives break gender norms and foster financial independence for women, promoting positive societal change. Ms. Mehta stressed the importance of creating a supportive environment for female entrepreneurs, advocating for mentorship, networking opportunities, and financial resources. Through her advocacy, Ms. Mehta highlighted the transformative potential of leveraging entrepreneurial spirit to drive gender equality and create a more equitable future.

- ***Dr Apoorva Patel, Head-Centre for Law & Society and Assistant Professor of Social Work***

Led by Dr. Apoorva Patel, the panel discussion delved into the intricacies of social entrepreneurship, stressing the indispensable role of legal and governmental support. Dr. Patel highlighted the necessity of robust legal frameworks to foster an environment conducive to social entrepreneurship's growth and sustainability. She emphasized the importance of clear, supportive policies tailored to the unique objectives of social enterprises, advocating for frameworks offering legal recognition, financial incentives, and regulatory exemptions. Moreover, Dr. Patel underscored the need for targeted government initiatives to assist nascent social entrepreneurs, proposing grants, incubation programs, and capacity-building efforts to help overcome initial challenges and enhance their chances of success. She commended India's government for its recognition of the sector, noting the establishment of a dedicated ministry, while also urging continued financing and expanded programming to meet diverse entrepreneurial needs nationwide. Highlighting the imperative of



collaboration among government, civil society, and the private sector, Dr. Patel emphasized the potential for innovative solutions through collective action. She reiterated the transformative role of legal and legislative support in shaping the trajectory of social entrepreneurship, urging governments



to proactively create inclusive policies that stimulate significant social and environmental progress.

- ***Dr Kalpesh Gupta, Founder Pro Bono India, Teacher & Researcher***

Dr. Kalpesh Gupta, an experienced moderator with a deep understanding of entrepreneurship, led the panel discussion on social entrepreneurship with objectivity and expertise, elevating the quality of discourse. Guiding the conversation towards an exploration of various entrepreneurial models and their social impact, Dr. Gupta ensured inclusivity and respect for diverse viewpoints, drawing on personal experiences to enrich participants' understanding. Emphasizing the diversity of entrepreneurship models, Dr. Gupta encouraged attendees to consider the wide array of approaches available for promoting social change, from corporate training programs to grassroots NGO initiatives. He prompted reflection on the challenges and opportunities inherent in different types of entrepreneurship, fostering a culture of critical analysis regarding scalability, sustainability, and impact. Creating a cooperative and immersive environment, he facilitated deep engagement with the subject

matter, inspiring participants to think innovatively about effecting positive change in their communities. Overall, Dr. Gupta's expert moderation enhanced the panel's exploration of entrepreneurship paradigms, providing guidance on the complexities of social entrepreneurship and empowering participants to creatively pursue positive societal transformations.

- ***Ms. Kinjal Shah, Founder of Shwas***

Ms. Kinjal Shah, a prominent female figure and founder of an NGO focused on empowering disadvantaged children, provided her perspective during the panel discussion on social entrepreneurship. Drawing from her firsthand experiences in underserved areas, she passionately highlighted how social entrepreneurship can empower individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly vulnerable children and their families. Ms. Shah shared impactful experiences and success stories from her NGO, illustrating how social entrepreneurship can unlock the potential of marginalized children and offer pathways to personal growth and empowerment. She emphasized the importance of recognizing and nurturing the talents of every child, regardless of socio-economic status, and addressing systemic barriers to poverty and inequality.

Highlighting social entrepreneurship's role in providing resources, education, and support to neglected communities, Ms. Shah advocated for comprehensive strategies addressing both immediate needs and systemic challenges. Ms. Shah's passionate endorsement of social entrepreneurship resonated with the audience, inspiring them to recognize its potential for positive impact in their own communities. Through her unwavering commitment, she underscored the transformative role of social entrepreneurship in building an equitable and inclusive society.

- ***Prof. Dr Ankur Saxena, Professor of Social work with Faculty of social work, M.S University of Baroda***

Professor Dr. Ankur Saxena, renowned for his expertise in addressing social challenges, delivered invaluable perspectives on social entrepreneurship's intricacies in tackling pressing societal issues. Drawing from extensive research and practical engagement, he illuminated the transformative potential of initiatives like the Akshay Patra Foundation and the PPP model for ISKCON, which addressed critical issues such as the midday meals scheme and educational access for marginalized populations. Emphasizing sustainability, Professor Saxena stressed strategic partnerships and diversified revenue streams. He highlighted corporate social entrepreneurship examples like Seva

Rural Jhagadiye and initiatives by individuals such as Dr. Desai Padmasree and HH Radhika Rajee Gaikwad. Championing diversity, equity, and inclusion, he advocated for empowering marginalized communities through initiatives like LGBTQIA+ training programs and support for acid attack survivors. Addressing challenges faced by social entrepreneurs, he underscored the importance of navigating complex social landscapes and securing regular funding. Professor Saxena epitomized academia's role in advancing the social entrepreneurship agenda, advocating for a more just and equitable society through scholarly expertise and unwavering advocacy.

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

In conclusion, the panel discussion on social entrepreneurship provided a comprehensive exploration of its multifaceted nature and transformative potential. Through insightful contributions from experts across various domains, the discourse highlighted the importance of social entrepreneurship in addressing pressing social and environmental challenges. From defining the core principles of social entrepreneurship to examining models, policies, and initiatives, the discussion underscored the critical role of collaboration, innovation, and inclusivity in driving meaningful change. Despite acknowledging the barriers and complexities inherent in the field, the panelists expressed optimism about the power of social entrepreneurship to create a more equitable and sustainable world. Overall, the discussion served as a catalyst for continued dialogue and action towards advancing the social entrepreneurship agenda and fostering positive impact in communities worldwide.



## VALEDICTORY CEREMONY

The two-day conference on “Access to Justice in South Asia” concluded with the launch of GLSR Volume IV and the valedictory ceremony, which included certificate distribution. The event was graced by the presence of distinguished individuals such as Prof. (Dr.) S. Shanthakumar, Director of GNLU; Prof. (Dr.) Dilip Ukey, Vice-Chancellor of MNLU, Mumbai; and Dr. Apoorva Patel. The conclusion of the 3rd International Conference on Social Work, Law, And Human Rights underscored the success of the gathering. The proceedings commenced with the Director honoring Dr. Dileep Ukey, followed by a valedictory address by Dr. S. Shanthakumar. In his speech, Dr. Shanthakumar emphasized the conference’s theme and the necessity for innovative solutions to facilitate access to justice.



He expressed gratitude to all involved in ensuring the event’s success and humbly apologized for any shortcomings. Following the Director’s speech, the highlight was the launch of GLSR Volume IV, made possible by the contributions of eminent social workers. These volumes play a vital role in enhancing understanding of critical issues, particularly those related to gender identity, and contribute significantly to societal progress. Subsequently, Prof. Dilip Ukey delivered an engaging speech, delving

into the evolving concept of the Rule of Law and the intrinsic connection between Access to Justice and human rights. He urged reflection on the importance of internal morality in legal frameworks, drawing parallels with historical contexts such as Nazi Germany. Prof. Ukey's discourse emphasized the intertwined nature of law, social work, human rights, and Access to Justice, stimulating contemplation among attendees.

Dr. Apoorva Patel then expressed gratitude to Dr. Shanthakumar and Prof. Ukey for their guidance and support. She extended appreciation to participants, presenters, and panel judges for their invaluable contributions. Prof. Patel recognized the efforts of the GNLU staff and her team at GCLS for their dedication in ensuring the conference's success. Throughout her address, Prof. Patel highlighted key moments of the conference, including insightful discussions and engaging presentations. She announced the winners of the Best Paper Presentations, commending their exceptional contributions to the discourse on justice and human rights. In conclusion, Prof. Patel thanked all involved in making the conference a success, expressing optimism that the knowledge shared will catalyze positive change within communities.

